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3-11-15

**Re: IN SUPPORT - Proposed S.B. No. 1072 *AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY***

Good afternoon distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee. For the record my name is Jay Sargent, I am President of the CT Association of Pawnbrokers and also the Managing Partner of TC's Pawn Company with multiple stores in Waterbury, CT area for over 30 years.

Although, the change in the language of one word from "may" to "shall" seem minor to some, the implications are not. In the 30 years I have spent in the industry, we have always assisted and worked closely with law enforcement to recover stolen property, identifying those in possession of it and ultimately through our record keeping evidence, assist in obtaining convictions, then eventually the return of property to the original owner. This has become an even more common occurrence since the passing of newer-- more comprehensive regulations in 2011, in which our Association initiated in early 2009.

When property is pawned or purchased at our businesses we record all information required by law, the customer transferring the property certifies in a signed statement the property is theirs and they have the right to sell it, there are no liens and furthermore, it is not stolen as required under Section 21-42§. We then invest money into the property, purchasing it, thus giving us a vested interest in the property. When an item we now have a vested interest in is seized as possible stolen property, this property should be kept as physical evidence until a judicial court has determined the property was in fact stolen. At the time of granting accelerated rehabilitation and/or sentencing the property should then be returned to its original owner and restitution should most definitely be ordered to the pawnbroker.

I have heard many times in the past when I question how the procedures currently work and have been told that "it's a risk of doing business". Well, it should not be a risk. We become a victim as well, after filing and recording all that is required by law, investing money into property then discovering the property was fraudulently sold to us, and having lost it under these circumstances. This put simply is "just not right". Over the years, this can add up to tens of thousands of dollars lost by businesses doing everything they can to do the right thing and operate within and beyond what the laws require, being suspect when dealing with the public, trying to help victims locate their property. This is money that could otherwise be used for hiring new employees, improving infrastructure, renovations or even expansion.

For many years we have sent letters respectfully requesting restitution in these cases but have at best received less than 5% restitution ordered by the courts. It is time to fix this and make it mandatory.

The removal of the "sunset date" will simply keep a consistency in how our businesses and customers do transactions. We believe that with all the regulations that passed in 2011 and the progress pawnbrokers and law enforcement have made that we should continue on this path of growth without disruption in the way we operate.

Thank you for your time today, I will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Jay Sargent  
President, C.A.P.  
Managing Partner, TC's Pawn Company